




HYT PRESS REVIEW

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Introducing The HYT Black Skull, The H2 Tradition And The H4 Alinghi Special Edition

No one could have predicted the success of HYT in such a few short years. When the brand launched in 2012, many were doubtful that this hybrid hydro-mechanical technology, indicating the time via a glass tube filled with liquids, would be reliable enough for the rough and tumble of life in a wristwatch. The unveiling of the first HYT H1 timepiece was not the marketing hype of a newfangled way of indicating time, but rather, it was the result of a decade of prior research, uniting some of the world's leading experts in the fields of chemistry, physics, aerospace, glass technology and nanotechnology... not to mention pioneering movement design.

Here's a look at the three latest watches of HYT, which between them span the gamut of everything a watch lover might possibly like — the Skull Bad Boy's barely restrained forcefulness, the optimism and openness of the H2 Tradition, and the sporting H4 Alinghi Special Edition.


The HYT Skull Bad Boy

The Skull was launched at the beginning of 2015 in two versions: The HYT Skull Green Eye, with a green liquid in a 51mm titanium & DLC black titanium case and the HYT Skull Red Eye with a red liquid in an 18-karat rose gold case with DLC titanium. The HYT Skull Diamond, set with 289 diamonds (≈0.858 carats) on the skull shape, debuted at Baselworld 2015. The Skull Maori, which has been totally hand engraved, highlighting the shape of the skull, emerged in November 2015, bringing the head count up to four.

Now the Skull Bad Boy is with us, and its monochrome palette highlights the bold design of the watch, showing us how well it stands on its own.

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Like with the previous versions, the entire dial of the HYT Skull Bad Boy is given up to the skull design, with the movement hidden from the dial side; only the bellows are visible through an opening at six o'clock. Instead, the H1 manual-winding movement is on full display through a tinted pane of sapphire crystal. The timepiece also features a running seconds indication in the left eye and a power reserve indicator in the right eye.

As with the other Skulls, the minutes have been eliminated to keep the focus on the skull, but they can be roughly observed as the liquid advances between the hour markers, much like the historical watches that only had one hand. The Skull watches oblige us to acknowledge the futility of trying to pin

every minute down. This deliberate emphasis on the ephemerality of time strengthened by the skull motif — the symbol of memento mori. The two ideas are inextricably linked in the HYT Skull watches; one literally outlines the other. Time flies, life is short, the HYT Skull Bad Boy seems to be telling us. Stop chasing the minutes and start enjoying yourself. Buy yourself a nice watch.

Whereas previous HYT timepieces featured translucent coloured liquids within their capillary tubes, the Skull Bad Boy opts to take a different path. "We really wanted to develop an opaque black liquid to give it a bad-boy, rebel aesthetic; it gives the perfect contrast with the timepiece," notes Vincent Perriard, CEO of HYT.

The watch as a whole is an exercise in contrast — the structured lines of the Clous de Paris dial guillochage set against the swirls of the Damascus steel skull; the ancient technique of mixed-metal laminate juxtaposed with the aggressively modern, industrial-looking skull; the lightness of the carbon case as counterpoint to the heavy philosophical associations with death and the passing of time; a luxury watch with zero luxury materials used in its making.

It is this tension between opposites, however, that allows the HYT Skull Bad Boy to endlessly fascinate.

The HYT H2 Tradition

The H2 Tradition is the latest addition to the H2 collection, taking the brand back to the roots of Haute Horlogerie with a design that unites the traditional codes of watchmaking with HYT's futurist style.


The timepiece celebrates classical watchmaking with a white lacquered subdial for the minutes at 12 o'clock and a white lacquered subdial for the seconds at 2:30. Both have Roman numerals, rose gold details and blue hands to match the blue liquid inside the timepiece. Complementing the subdials, there is also an exterior chapter ring in white lacquer with Roman numerals, framing the timepiece and accentuating the mechanics below.

The traditional details don't stop at the dial, with a main plate that has a diamond guilloché finish that is visible from both the front and the back of the case, and components that have been finished in accordance with the highest standards of Swiss watchmaking. All the bridges have been also modified, reconstructed, softened and beveled by hand.

The movement has been slightly redesigned with the balance being re-centered to accommodate the minute subdial at 12 o'clock.

Like with the other timepieces in the H2 Collection, this was achieved by HYT's partners Audemars Piguet Renaud & Papi (APRP).

"We don't like to follow and we don't react to the market," explains Perriard. "We are always in creative mode, following our instincts when it comes to design. The H2 Tradition is a strategic timepiece for those who love traditional horology, but who are also open to something completely different."



The H4 Alinghi Special Edition


The year 2015 marked HYT's association with the Swiss Alinghi team, one of the world's leading sailing teams. Two-time winners of the America's Cup, Alinghi has also won multiple Bols d'Ors, D35 Trophies and two Extreme Sailing Series.

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The H4 Alinghi Special Edition

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This new collaboration is a fantastic fit for the hydro mechanical horologists who also have water and state-of-the-art technology at the core of their DNA. "We are really excited about our partnership with Alinghi; we are a small brand, but we have the will and the power to lead such a marketing offensive, and we have more partnerships in the works," notes Perriard.

In true watchmaking fashion, HYT marked its new partnership with a brand new timepiece—the H4 Alinghi Special Edition. The H4 is based on the inaugural H1 movement, but has been totally skeletonized for the new H4 collection. There is also an additional crown on the H4 Alinghi Special Edition model, which when pushed, activates two LED lights inside the movement, flooding the mechanism and the liquid module with light. This fun and highly practical light feature, a first in a mechanical wristwatch, goes perfectly with the brand, which is already a leader in using hybrid technology.

In just a short time, HYT has not only been able to execute its dreams of capturing liquid inside a wristwatch, but it has also built a highly successful company. The brand has gone from one watch, one movement and a handful of employees to 20 references, four movements and 40 employees...and with 400 watches sold a year, things show no sign of slowing down. With a host of exciting new products unveiled in 2015 and more on the horizon for 2016, HYT is the perfect example of how interdisciplinary projects can push Haute Horlogerie into exciting new directions, proving that, when it comes to a brand like HYT, the old proverb "Everything has already been done in watchmaking" couldn't be further from the truth.

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